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ABSTRACT

This packet contains materials, process guidelines, discussion questions, and suggestions that serve as a guide for a 3-hour training session on the topic of organizational culture for groups of from 7 to 21 (or more) adults. During the training session, participants simulate organizational behaviors following three different sets of cultural rules. Participants take turns playing the roles of organization members, community members, and observers. After simulating each of the three organizational cultures, participants identify strengths and weaknesses inherent in each culture. Final discussion focuses on cultural characteristics of effective organizations, how organizational members can cope with problems they perceive in an organization's culture, and what organizational leaders can do to manage organizational culture. A participant guide is included that discusses: (1) categories of organizational culture; (2) how culture is embedded and transmitted; and (3) methods for fostering a cohesive organizational culture. (PPB)

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THE CULTURE OF ORGANIZATIONS
A Set of Learning Activities for Community Leaders

Designed by Jim Ulrich
August 1989

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THE CULTURE OF ORGANIZATIONS
A Set of Learning Activities for Community Leaders

Designed by Jim Ulrich, Ph.D.
August 1988

FACILITATOR GUIDE

OVERVIEW

"The Culture of Organizations" contains materials, process guidelines, discussion questions, and suggestions all of which serve as a guide for a three-hour training session introducing the topic of organizational culture to a group of from 7 to 21 (or more) adults.

During the training session, participants will simulate organizational behaviors following three different sets of cultural "rules." Participants take turns playing the roles of organization members, community members, and observers. After simulating each of the three organizational cultures, participants identify strengths and weaknesses inherent in each culture. Final discussion focusses on cultural characteristics of effective organizations, how organizational members can cope with problems they perceive in an organization's culture, and what organizational leaders can do to manage organizational culture.

The suggested instructional sequence is as follows:

(1) Introduction

(a) The Facilitator introduces the topic and provides a rationale for its importance to community leaders.

(b) Participants read a written introduction to the concepts and principles of organizational culture as they apply particularly to nonprofit, voluntary and other community-based organizations.

(2) Role Play with Debriefing

(a) Through role play, the group simulates three different organizational cultures and how each affects organizational output.

(b) Participants reflect on what they learned through the simulated exercise.

(3) Discussion and Application:

The group concludes with a focussed discussion of organizational culture, its relevance to organizations of which group participants are members, and how they might apply what they have learned to their own situations.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The learning activities described below are most appropriate for adults who are already members (officers, elected officials, board members, paid or voluntary staff) of one or more community-based organizations. Ideally they will have an interest not only in how they can be better members of their organizations, but also in how each of the organizations to which they belong can develop as an organization and become more effective in its service to the community.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After the training session, participants will

(1) be able to explain in their own words what organizational culture is and why it is relevant to members of organizations;

(2) be able to observe more carefully organizational events, actions, communication patterns and spatial arrangements which evidence the culture of an organization;

(3) state basic elements of a strategy that organizational members could use to cope with perceived dysfunctions in an organization's culture;

(4) identify and explain (using written materials) actions that organizational leaders can take to affect the organizational culture positively.

(5) given the direction and resources provided, be able to continue learning on their own about organizational culture.

GROUP SIZE

The role plays described below require a minimum of 7 participants (excluding the Facilitator). In groups with more than 21 participants, some will have only an observational role during the three rounds of role plays.

For groups of 22 or more participants, the structured exercise can be used as is by dividing the larger group into the appropriate number of smaller, separate groups of from 11 to 21 in size. Each subgroup should have its own facilitator during the exercise.

TIME REQUIRED

An optimal duration for each portion of the training session is as follows:

(1)	Introduction and Overview		20 minutes
(2)	Read Written Article; Answer Questions		15 minutes
(3)	Role Plays (with debriefing)		
	(a) Round One & Debriefing	40 min.	
	(b) Round Two & Debriefing	30 min.	
	(c) Round Three & Debriefing	30 min.	
			100 minutes
(4)	Discussion and Application		35 minutes
(5)	Evaluation of Learning		10 minutes
Total			3 hours

PHYSICAL SETTING REQUIRED

The introductory, group exercise, and discussion segments require one room large enough to seat comfortably all the participants--when possible, in a circle around a large conference table or several desks pushed together. The room should contain at least five extra chairs for use by participants during the role play portions of the agenda.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

A blackboard and chalk, flip chart and markers, or an overhead projector.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Quantity	Item
1	Facilitator Guide
1 per person	"The Culture of Organizations" Article (in Participant Guide)
4	ABC Food Bank Staff Member Round One Briefing Sheet
3	Member of the Public Round One Briefing Guide
1 per person*	Observer Briefing Guide (Round One)
3	Round One Role Cards
4	ABC Food Bank Staff Member Round Two Briefing Sheet
3	Member of the Public Round Two Briefing Guide
1 per person*	Observer Briefing Guide (Round Two)
3	Round Two Role Cards
4	ABC Food Bank Staff Member Round Three Briefing Sheet
3	Member of the Public Round Three Briefing Guide
1 per person*	Observer Briefing Guide (Round Three)
3	Round Three Role Cards
1 per person	Discussion Guide
1 per person	"For Further Learning" Handout
1 per person	Participant Evaluation Form
1 per person	Nametags
8	Title cards for ABC Food Bank staff members in Rounds One and Two

* i.e., one per person beyond the first seven participants

DEFINITIONS

The meanings of the following terms used in these materials are as given below:

Organization: A dynamic and open system that is made up of interrelated elements and which takes inputs from the environment, subjects them to some form of transformation process, and produces output (Katz and Kahn, 1978).

Organizational culture: patterns of meanings, values, and behavior shared by an organization's members.

PROCESSES

Introduction and Overview

1. Introduction of Participants. Have participants give, in turn, their name, an organization they belong to, and their role in that organization. (5 to 10 minutes)

2. Present Session Agenda. Post the agenda for the session and explain each item briefly. Allow comments, questions or suggestions. (2 minutes)

   Sample agenda contents follow:

   AGENDA
   Overview
   Written Article
   Structured Exercise
   Discussion
   Conclusion
   Evaluation

3. Overview. Carefully explain what organizational culture is and why it is important and relevant for leaders of voluntary and other community-based organizations. State the learning objectives for the session; in general, these are: to provide an introduction to the topic of organizational culture, to give participants some experience in observing organizational culture, to begin developing strategies for coping with perceived dysfunctions in an organization's culture, and to begin developing strategies for managing organizational culture. (12 to 15 minutes)

Written Article

4. Read Written Article. Direct participants to read "The Culture of Organizations." They should skim over Parts I and IV, concentrate on Parts III and V, and use the "Thought Questions" at the end of each part to help them apply the material to the organizations of which they are members. After 10 minutes, invite brief discussion or questions on the concepts presented in the article. (12 to 15 minutes)

Role Play--Round One

5. Setup for Role Play. Distribute (4) ABC Food Bank Staff Member Briefing Sheets (Round One), (3) Member of the Public Round One Briefing Sheets, and Round One Observer Briefing Sheets to all other participants. Arrange empty chairs in positions for the Food Bank staff members to assume, placing the chair for the Receptionist closer to the remaining participants. Put title cards in position and a chair for

visitors by the Receptionist's chair. Allow 4 or 5 minutes for the Food Bank Staff Members to read and understand their (lengthy) Briefing Sheets. Give Members of the Public their Role Cards. (5 minutes)

6. Round One Interaction. Allow the role plays to develop as much as possible without interruption. (15 to 25 minutes)

7. Round One Debriefing. Begin by asking the Members of the Public how they felt (satisfied, frustrated [why?], etc.). Then ask the staff members how they felt (justified, also frustrated, etc.). Is it conceivable that a service organization could operate this way? Finally ask the observers to describe what they saw and what meanings they read into the ABC Food Bank's culture. Can they guess what some of the "cultural rules" were? How would participants describe this culture, using one-word adjectives? (10 to 12 minutes)

Role Play--Round Two

8. Role Play Setup. Follow the same procedure as in Round One, except put the Director's chair closest to the remaining participants. (4 minutes)

9. Round Two Interaction. (15 to 25 minutes)

10. Round Two Debriefing. Follow the same general procedure as in Round One Debriefing, above. Invite comparison between the Food Bank Round Two culture and its Round One culture. (10 to 12 minutes)

Role Play--Round Three

11. Role Play Setup. Follow the same procedures as in Rounds One and Two. Place the four staff chairs around a small table, if possible. (4 minutes)

12. Round Three Interaction. Cut these short, if need be, to reserve adequate time (at least 30 minutes, if possible) for the Discussion/Application. (15 to 25 minutes)

13. Round Three Debriefing. Debrief as before, but not for as long. (8 to 10 minutes)

Discussion and Application

14. Discussion/Application. Focus the discussion around three major topics (see Learning Objectives 2, 3 and 4, above): how to observe and study organizational culture, how to cope with an organization's culture, and how to manage organizational culture.

First, ask the participants to list specific activities they can perform to learn more about an organization's culture. A sample list so generated may appear as follows:

Observing Skills
Be active
Ask questions
Read documents
Generate hypotheses
Test hypotheses

Next, distribute the "Discussion Guide" handout. Have participants generate elements of a "coping strategy," as suggested in discussion question 1A. The resulting list might resemble the following sample:

Coping Strategy
Conform (actively)
Suspend judgment
Find like-minded people
Request a change
Capitalize on "strong" cultural elements
Wait for a leadership role
Quit

Encourage discussion on any of the items mentioned by participants or on discussion questions 1B and 1C, time permitting.

Finally, have participants identify ways to affect an organization's culture positively. A sample list of such possible managerial interventions is:

Managing Strategy
Articulate values
Positive reinforcement
Reduce status barriers
Encourage feedback
Get outside help
Model desired behaviors

If time permits, and/or if most participants are members of one particular organization, discuss the questions raised on the second side of the handout (Question 3).
(Total time: 25 to 35 minutes, or longer, if available)

15. Suggestions for Further Learning. Distribute the "For Further Learning" handout and briefly highlight some options for those interested in learning more. (2 minutes)

Evaluation of Learning

16. Training Session Evaluation. Distribute "Participant Evaluation Form" and allow 5 to 7 minutes for participants to complete them. Allow for comments or discussion, if any. Collect the forms and thank those present for their participation. (5 to 10 minutes)

NOTES

1. Design of the Rounds One, Two and Three Food Bank cultures was patterned after what Koberg and Chusmir (1987) describe as bureaucratic, innovative, and supportive cultures, respectively. Each of these culture types was constructed (hypothetically), in turn, based upon the need for power (Round One), need for achievement (Round Two), and the need for affiliation (Round Three) of Murray's (Explorations in Personality, 1938) need theory. Acknowledgement of material quoted from Koberg and Chusmir on the Briefing Sheets is hereby made.

2. When debriefing after all three rounds of role plays, it may help to point out ways in which the simulated cultures did or did not represent the reality of organizational culture. In particular, participants should not be left with the impression that an organization's culture can be adequately understood through witnessing a few scenarios or slices of organizational life. To formulate an accurate understanding of an organization's culture, one must observe a wide diversity of organizational events (documents, procedures, policies, etc.) over time, formulate hypotheses about shared meanings, then test those hypotheses by talking to organizational members and further observation. One can get a feel for organizational climate from the role plays, but this should not be assumed to represent the total culture.

3. Use at least three different colors for the printed briefing guides given to participants in each Round. In Round Two, begin distributing briefing sheets (i.e., roles) by giving those who were observers in Round One the Food Bank staff and Member of the Public roles. With more than 14 participants, begin Round Three by giving the more active roles to any participants who were observers in both previous Rounds.

4. The author wishes to thank Lela Vandenberg and Frank Fear for helpful comments on earlier drafts of the Participant Guide article and Joe Levine for his wonderfully creative and simplifying suggestions on the role play group process design.

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(End of Facilitator Guide)

THE CULTURE OF ORGANIZATIONS

An Introduction for Community Leaders

by Jim Ulrich, Ph.D.

August 1988

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

> *Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds, religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found seminaries, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; in this manner they found hospitals, prisons, and schools. . . . Wherever at the head of some new undertaking you see the government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association."*
>
> -Alexis de Tocqueville

Part I
Organizations in the Community

What de Tocqueville observed about Americans over 150 years ago is no less true today. The 1989 edition of The Encyclopedia of Associations has over 20,000 entries, ranging from the Aardvark Aficionados to the Zoroastrian Research Center. Everywhere people form groups, and they do so for a variety of reasons. People like being with others who share a common interest; they find identity, or security, or purpose in a group; or they feel they can be more effective or operate more economically or speak with a louder voice if they band together with others.

Community leaders recognize that their community envelops a network of associations, or organizations, and, in turn, is enveloped by a larger network of organizations. Overlapping and intertwined, these associations make up the social fabric of America and provide significant opportunities for enrichment, education, exchange, economic development, and the enhancement of our quality of life--not to mention a measure of social and political stability. The impacts and benefits of all types of organizations--from corporations to public institutions to nonprofit, voluntary associations--are nowhere felt more profoundly than on the local level, where the people who make up these diverse groups live.

It is no coincidence that leaders in a local community are invariably members--and leaders--in one or more local organizations: that's often how they came to be recognized as leaders. They stepped out and got involved with other people; they took risks, worked their way through "the system," and learned along the way--from within--how various organizations function. And, like cream in a bottle (you remember the good old days--before homogenized milk), they rose to the top.

Community leaders are usually also leaders, or *managers*, of local organizations. They work through various agencies to reach goals that benefit community members and foster the ongoing development of the community. Whether a plant manager, president of the PTA or pastor, a member of a farmer's cooperative, hospital board or Rotary Club, each community leader has a significant role not only in shaping the organizations to which he or she belongs, but also in

determining the types of impacts those organizations have on their clientele (consumers of their products or services) and on their constituencies (stockholders, supporters and stakeholders, including the local community).

Organizations, like communities, are dynamic, not static. Like all living organisms, they need to be guided and nurtured. True, all organizations change--even when leaders do nothing to bring about change. Organizations change when operating procedures are improved, problems are solved, or the organization responds to some change in its environment such as legislative action or decreased funding. Sometimes such natural or evolutionary changes are considered desirable, sometimes undesirable.

But organizations must be helped to develop--to change purposively and for the better, to blossom and mature. Only when leaders plan carefully and act responsibly to bring about desired change is it proper to say an organization is developing. We call such a process of guided change *organizational development* (or sometimes simply *OD*).

Thought Questions:

(1) To what local organizations do you belong?
(2) What is your role in each of these organizations?
(3) How have these organizations changed since you joined them?
(4) Did the changes just happen, or were they managed by organizational leaders?

Part II
The Organizational Development Process

Organizational leaders, then, can help their organizations change in ways that benefit their members and the local community. Such organizational development is *a systematic effort to manage an organization-wide change process*. OD so affects every aspect of an organization--its philosophy and mission, its work procedures, its personnel practices, the values and assumptions of its members--that we may think of organizational development as the planned process of change in an organization's total culture.

Fortunately, you don't have to be an industrial psychologist or management expert to implement the basic steps in the OD process. Four key steps are summarized here:

(1) Organizational development begins with the recognition of a need or problem. For example, perhaps other efforts to increase an organization's effectiveness or to meet certain goals have been tried, yet none seems to work. Or perhaps morale is low, for no apparent reason. The first step in OD, then, is to ***define the "problem."*** Often this involves observing and talking with people, then analyzing the information obtained.

(2) Once a problem is tentatively identified, the leaders and key agents of change in the organization must ***decide what to do*** about the data gathered. They may begin by deciding, for example, that the data reveal a different problem than the original one identified. They may decide to do nothing, or request more data to be gathered. If they decide to act, then they must plan the steps to be taken.

(3) After a decision has been made and a plan of action agreed upon, organizational leaders ***implement the plan***. A plan for OD could include such actions as: redefining job roles, changing communication patterns, training individuals or groups, altering the organization's structure, or adopting new personnel practices.

(4) After a plan of action has been implemented, leaders and others responsible

for organizational development systematically try to ***learn from what happened***. They look at the results of their actions and ask whether what actually happened was what they intended to happen, or, if it was not intended, whether it was good or bad. At this stage, often new "problems" are recognized, and the cycle begins again.

These basic steps in the OD process may be applied in many different ways at different times. For example, the types of problems addressed may vary in importance and nature. The process may also be applied at different levels to solve problems arising from individuals, groups, departments, or within the entire organization. And finally, different people may be responsible for implementing the process; outside consultants, members of the personnel department, or the top leaders of the organization may all take different roles in managing organizational development.

Thought Questions:

Think of a single problem that arose in one of the organizations to which you belong. How was the problem managed?

(1) Who took responsibility for solving the problem?
(2) How was the problem defined?
(3) What decision was made about the problem?
(4) How was the plan implemented?
(5) What learning in the organization occurred because of the way the problem was handled?

Part III
What Is Organizational Culture?

In order to emphasize that organizational development affects all aspects of an organization, we said above that OD is the planned process of change in an organization's *total culture*. But what exactly do we mean by this? And what are the implications for leading organizations?

Culture is a complex phenomenon which can be viewed in different ways. For our purposes, we will say that the culture of an organization consists of *patterns of meanings, values, and behaviors shared by the organization's members*. The fact that culture is made up of patterns indicates that people have discovered or developed, over time, ways to order their world so that ideas and events can be interpreted by different members in the same or in similar ways. When new people join an organization, then, they either learn gradually through their experience, observations and feedback the regularities of such patterns, or they are taught them (through an orientation program, for example) so that they "fit in"--in other words, so they learn the "correct" way to perceive, think, feel, and act in the organization.

Organizational culture does not focus merely on people's actions, but goes deep to the core of what an organization is and helps us understand why people behave as they do. Organizational culture should not be confused with organizational *climate*, which is an assessment of how people feel about working in the organizational environment. Rather, culture includes the core values of the organization, rules for acceptable behavior, and even the stories, folklore or myths that members celebrate in their common history.

Gerard Egan has identified five overlapping and interactive categories which contribute to the overall culture of an organization. He states that an organization's history, beliefs, values, standards, and patterns of behavior all contribute to the unique shape of its culture. These five elements are described in Figure 1.

It should be noted that the culture of an organization is always embedded in the larger

Figure 1

Categories of Organizational Culture

1. *History/Tradition. The ways in which the past lives on in the organizational present.* This includes the history, the stories, the critical historical incidents, the myths, the founders, the heroes and heroines, the exploits and the traditions of the system. People celebrate certain things in the system's past and forget others.

2. *Beliefs.* These are the assumptions, understandings, and dogmas of the system. They relate to the work the system does, the people in the system, and the environment. Churches and some social organizations state their beliefs explicitly.

3. *Values.* These are the things the organization prizes. For example, IBM prizes customer service; managers must spend a great deal of time listening and responding to customer inquiries and complaints.

4. *Norms and Standards.* These are the "oughts," "shoulds," "dos," "don'ts," principles, policies, rules, laws, and taboos that govern the behavior of the system as a whole. . . . Norms and standards define the behaviors that will be rewarded in the system and limit the behaviors that will be tolerated in the system.

5. *Patterns of Behavior.* Included here are the ways of doing things in the system: the patterns of behavior, habits, rituals, and ceremonies that are prevalent. Just as history and tradition influence beliefs, values, and standards, so do beliefs, values, and standards generate patterns of behavior. For example, in organizations that are very conservative and prize stability, risk-taking behaviors do not abound.

(Source: Egan, 1985)

context of the surrounding society. A small, community-based organization in rural America, then, will reflect to a significant degree the beliefs, values, and behaviors of its parent culture, which itself may be a blend of American popular culture and an ethnic subculture, shaped in a particular socio-economic environment such as farming, mining or manufacturing. Each individual organization, however, has its own history and unique ways of seeing the world and doing things which set it apart even from other organizations in the same locale. Also, large organizations by no means have one, monolithic culture but may be composed of several, distinct subcultures that share some integrating elements of a dominant organizational culture.

Organizational leaders do influence the culture of the organization, not only by what they say about what members should believe (about the goals, purposes and values of the organization) and about how they should behave, but also by what values, beliefs, and behaviors the leaders actually model. For example, saying that the organization is one, big, happy family where all have equal status will only be convincing if privileges and rewards are, in fact, distributed equitably.

Of course, leaders themselves are shaped, influenced and constrained by the organization's culture--itself a powerful force giving stability and security to members on the one hand, but resisting the attempts of leaders to change it on the other hand. Nevertheless, organizational culture is dynamic, constantly changing, acting on members to influence their beliefs and behaviors, yet responding to changes in the organization and in the environment.

Thought Question:

Edgar Schein has identified ten "mechanisms" by which culture is embedded in an organization and transmitted to organizational members (Figure 2). The mechanisms near the top of the list are more explicit ways of reinforcing an organization's culture, while the lower items are implicit and potentially more ambiguous.

Choose one organization to which you belong. For each mechanism listed in Figure 2, *think* (don't write) of an element in that organization's culture which exemplifies the mechanism described.

Part IV
Why Study Organizational Culture?

Now that we have defined organizational culture, realized how it manifests itself in various contexts, and seen its place in the overall OD process, we can briefly point out some reasons why an understanding of organizational culture is important and relevant to community leaders and the roles they have in organizations. We state in summary fashion, then, reasons why organizational culture may be helpful, in turn, to individual organization members (including leaders and non-leaders), to organizations as a whole, and to the community itself.

Figure 2

How Is Culture Embedded and Transmitted?

1. *Formal statements of organizational philosophy, charters, creeds, materials used for recruitment and selection, and socialization.*
2. *Design of physical spaces, facades, buildings.*
3. *Deliberate role modeling, teaching and coaching by leaders.*
4. *Explicit status and reward system, promotion criteria.*
5. *Stories, legends, myths, and parables about key people and events.*
6. *What leaders pay attention to, measure and control.*
7. *Leader reactions to critical incidents and organizational crises* (times when organizational survival is threatened, norms are unclear or challenged, insubordination occurs, threatening or meaningless events occur, and so forth).
8. *How the organization is designed and structured.* (The design of work, who reports to whom, degree of decentralization, functional or other criteria for differentiation, and mechanisms used for integration carry implicit messages of what leaders assume and value.)
9. *Organizational systems and procedures.* (The type of information, control, and decision support systems in terms of categories of information, time cycles, who gets what information, and when and how performance appraisal and other review processes are conducted carry implicit messages of what leaders assume and value.)
10. *Criteria used for recruitment, selection, promotion, leveling off, retirement, and "excommunication" of people* (the implicit and possibly subconscious criteria that leaders use to determine who "fits" and who doesn't "fit" membership roles and key slots in the organization).

(Source: Schein, 1983)

Relevance to Individuals. (1) It is not uncommon for community leaders to join other organizations, committees, or boards of which they are not a designated leader. Through a growing understanding of the organization's culture, new members can *"fit in" more quickly* by adapting their behaviors to existing norms. For example, new members of an organization frequently see problems that "old timers" either don't see or have come to take for granted; a common mistake newcomers make, however, is speaking out before they understand what the cultural rules are governing how feedback or criticisms are communicated and handled within the organization.

(2) An individual in the role of organizational leader will find *a new perspective from which to view the organization and act to solve its problems* by considering its organizational culture. (Part V, below, explains what organizational leaders can do to manage organizational culture.)

Relevance to Organizations. Why are an appreciation for organizational culture in particular and a commitment to organizational development in general important to the effectiveness of organizations?

(3) When leaders are aware of their organization's culture and make a conscious effort to manage it responsibly, the major outcome will be *improved service to the organization's clientele*. For example, nonprofit organizations, voluntary associations, public institutions and government agencies sometimes develop a culture which values the organization, its members and its future even above the members of the public they exist to serve. Proper management of organizational culture can transform the organization into one that is truly consumer-oriented.

(4) As community-based organizations seek *to include minorities* in their clientele groups, *to broaden their membership base, and to develop new leaders* within the organization, understanding the organization's culture, how it is perceived by nonmembers, and how it is transmitted to new members is critical. The organization's culture itself could, for example, pose a barrier to nonmembers, hindering them from receiving the organization's help or participating in the organization.

(5) As cooperation with other organizations within and between communities becomes more and more necessary, *understanding other agencies' organizational cultures* can be an important key in making partnerships function more synergistically.

Relevance to the Community. (6) Several frequent outcomes of a successful OD program are that organizational members: feel better about their (paid or voluntary) work environment, turnover less frequently, and are more satisfied with their role in the organization. *Increased pride in the organization and the community* will likely follow. And, in the long run, this could mean a community retains more of its leaders.

(7) If OD in community-based organizations does foster improved services to their various clientele groups--that is, in most cases, community members--then those improved services *add to the community's overall quality of life.*

Thought Question:

For which of the above seven reasons is understanding organizational culture important to you?

Part V
Managing Organizational Culture

Up to this point, we have simply explained what organizational culture is, how it relates to the organizational development process, and why it is a topic of some importance to leaders of organizations. But we have not considered *what organizational leaders actually can do* to affect the organization's culture--either for the better or for the worse. In what sense, if any, is it even possible to "manage" an organization's culture?

Here, managers of organizations should be warned that organizational culture is not one more lever to pull, one more tool to use, but first and foremost is a way of seeing, of gaining a different perspective on the organization. Furthermore, organizations are unique, as are the communities in which they function; a similar problem in two organizations may require completely different approaches because of differing contextual factors.

What a manager does depends not only on how the problem is perceived, but on what vision the manager has for the organization. What are or should be the core values of a particular organization? Only its members can say. The members of another, similar organization may have quite a different vision for their association. Hence the difficulty--indeed, the impossibility--of making universal recommendations for managing organizational culture.

Nonetheless, several models have been constructed of types of actions intended to alter an organization's culture. One such model is presented in Figure 3. The authors emphasize four key conditions that characterize a "strong" organizational culture, making the organization resemble a well-functioning family unit. By cultivating a sense of organizational history, by creating a sense of oneness, by strengthening membership ties, and by promoting exchange among members, leaders can help the organization develop a cohesive and supportive culture.

Figure 3

Methods for Growing a Cohesive Organizational Culture

Develop a Sense of History

Elaborate on the organization's history; articulate a common destiny

Celebrate "heroes" and share testimonies of their successes

Create a Sense of Oneness

Role model qualities consistent with the values, norms and practices considered desirable

Communicate (orally and in writing) norms and values

Project the organization's culture correctly and positively in all external communication

Promote a Sense of Membership

Identify desired behaviors (short-term and long-term achievements) and reward them appropriately

Provide for career advancement and job security

Recruit and staff to match individualvalues to organizational values

Socialize new staff members

Make training and development a priority

Increase Exchange Among Members

Promote member contact and mutual sharing of ideas

Involve members in the organization's decision-making processes

Manage intergroup conflict

(Source: Gross and Shichman, 1987)

The model makes certain assumptions about an "ideal" organization with which not

all will agree. Still, the model is useful for presenting a wide range of possible actions by organizational managers; it further suggests that organizational leaders need to be vigilant on many fronts in order to develop a "cohesive" organizational culture--one that is relatively free from internal contradictions.

As organizational leaders use these and other methods, the primary purpose remains that of helping the organization develop, enabling its members better to meet the organization's goals. Following the OD process (see Part II, above), problems must first be identified. Understanding and studying the organizational culture can help bring the problem into focus, enable managers to see how the problem area relates to the rest of the organization, and inform the process of deciding what to do. After a plan for organizational change has been implemented, organizational leaders will look for results; once again, they will study the total organizational culture to see if their efforts at change have been successful.

Thought Questions:

(1) Following the recommendations of Gross and Shichman (Figure 3) requires spending time, effort, and money in ways not directly related to an organization's effectiveness in meeting its goals. How can such expenses be justified? How can a balance between OD and organizational output be struck?

(2) Which of the methods for managing organizational culture in Figure 3 would be most valuable for a particular organization you belong to? Why? Which would be least valuable, and why?

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ABC Food Bank Staff Member
Round One Briefing Sheet

PLEASE DO NOT SHOW THIS BRIEFING SHEET TO ANYONE ELSE.

Organizational Background

You are one of four staff members of the Alpha-Beta County (ABC) Food Bank. Your agency serves the entire population of Alpha-Beta County and has the support of all the town councils, civic groups, religious organizations and charitable agencies in the County. Your staff is responsible for soliciting cash and food donations, for recruiting and training volunteers, for overseeing local food storage and distribution points, and for working with the state Department of Social Services.

Organizational History

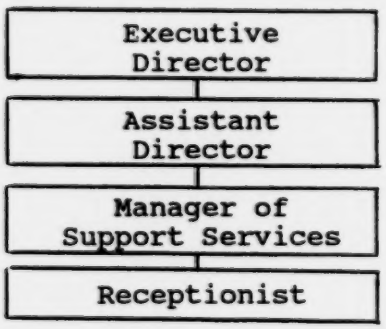
The Alpha-Beta County Food Bank is a twenty-year old agency formed in response to the War on Poverty of the Johnson era. The Food Bank is well-known throughout the County because of its longevity, and it enjoys a reputation of excellence. Down through the years you have worked carefully with local leaders and State officals to respond in a timely manner both to individual needs and to widespread crises. By tracking economic indicators, you have been able to predict, with a fair degree of accuracy, the demand for food assistance.

The present Executive Director, although not the Food Bank founder, has trained and managed the staff so well that most matters are handled routinely, as a matter of course.

Organizational Structure

There are four members who comprise the ABC Food Bank staff: The Executive Director, The Assistant Director, The Manager of Support Services, and The Receptionist.

Your role is highlighted in the organizational chart below:



Organizational Assumptions and Core Values

After twenty years of effective service in the County, your work has become highly organized, compartmentalized, and systematic. You have clear lines of responsibility and authority. The leadership style within the Food Bank is mature, stable, competent, and relatively cautious. The planning process has been honed down to a science, and explicit objectives are stated before any new initiative is undertaken. Everything you do is thorough, fully documented, and dutifully reported to your constituency.

Your organizational culture is characterized as: hierarchical, procedural, structured, ordered, regulated, established, solid, cautious, and power-oriented.

Organizational Cultural Rules

During Round One of this exercise, you will follow the rules given below, which--though not unbreakable--have long come to be "the way things are done around here." These rules are not anything you have agreed upon explicitly or, for that matter, a topic for discussion; they are just normal operating procedure.

(1) Always refer to others by their titles, not their names. (E.g., "The Assistant Director," not "Mrs. Schneider")

(2) Each of you has a separate "desk" in your own corner of the room. The Receptionist is nearest the door (and receives all visitors to the office). If you wish to speak with someone, it is proper for you to get up and go to that person's "desk" and speak quietly--rather than talking with one another across the room.

(3) The Receptionist is very protective of the other three staff members. If a decision from one of the other staff members is needed, the Receptionist instructs the visitor to wait in a chair by the door while the Receptionist goes to handle the matter.

(4) Committee members strictly observe rank in the organizational hierarchy. The Receptionist deals directly with the Manager of Support Services in a formal and subordinate manner; the Receptionist does not talk directly to the Executive Director or to the Assistant Director. The Manager of Support Services talks directly only with the Receptionist and the Assistant Director. The Assistant Director only talks directly with the Manager of Support Services and the Executive Director. The Executive Director only deals with the Assistant Director.

(5) Decisions at the ABC Food Bank are never made on an ad hoc basis, but always with reference to established procedures and the overall goals of the agency. Once you have confirmed that a certain matter is your responsibility, go ahead and make a decision without consulting any other staff members. Authority, decisions, and information flow down the hierarchy, not up.

Responsibilities

Each of the four Committee members has full and sole responsibility for the areas or concerns listed below:

Receptionist:	screening contacts with the public bookkeeping; donations record keeping
Manager of Support Services:	volunteer coordination purchase of office supplies
Assistant Director:	liaison with the State & other agencies qualification of program recipients (i.e., people needing food assistance)
Executive Director:	financial reports community and media relations

Note: In dealing with the members of the public during Round One role plays, feel free to use your imagination to make up details that will fit the context, history, and values of the organization.

PLEASE RETURN THIS BRIEFING SHEET TO THE FACILITATOR AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION FOLLOWING ALL THREE SETS OF ROLE PLAYS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Round One

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC BRIEFING GUIDE

ROUND ONE WILL CONSIST OF THREE ROLE PLAYS, OR INTERACTIONS, BETWEEN THE FOOD BANK STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. YOU WILL PLAY THE ROLE OF ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. YOUR TASK WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU, WRITTEN ON A SEPARATE CARD, BY THE FACILITATOR.

BEFORE THE ROLE PLAYS BEGIN, READ THE FOLLOWING:

Organizational Background

The Alpha-Beta County (ABC) Food Bank serves the entire population of Alpha-Beta County and has the support of all the town councils, civic groups, religious organizations and charitable agencies in the County. The staff is responsible for soliciting cash and food donations, for recruiting and training volunteers, for overseeing local food storage and distribution points, and for working with the state Department of Social Services.

Organizational History

The Alpha-Beta County Food Bank is a twenty-year old agency formed in response to the War on Poverty of the Johnson era. The Food Bank is well-known throughout the County because of its longevity, and it enjoys a reputation of excellence. Down through the years, the Food Bank has worked carefully with local leaders and State officals to respond in a timely manner both to individual needs and to widespread crises. By tracking economic indicators, the Food Bank staff members have been able to predict, with a fair degree of accuracy, the demand for food assistance.

The present Executive Director, although not the Food Bank founder, has trained and managed the staff so well that most matters are handled routinely, as a matter of course.

IN ADDITION TO PLAYING THE ROLE OF ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, YOU ARE ALSO ASKED TO OBSERVE WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE ROLE PLAYS AND TO TRY TO DISCOVER WHAT MEANINGS ARE IMPLICIT IN THE CULTURE OF THE ABC FOOD BANK BASED ON WHAT YOU SEE, HEAR AND EXPERIENCE.

USE THE FIVE QUESTIONS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE TO GUIDE YOU AS YOU OBSERVE. YOU MAY WRITE DOWN YOUR ANSWERS EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER YOU HAVE PLAYED OUT YOUR ROLE.

(The answers you write down are for your own use and will not be collected or seen by anyone else.)

-OVER-

Round One

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC OBSERVATION GUIDE

How efficiently do the members of the Food Bank handle the matters brought to them by the members of the public?

What type of leadership style would you say exists at the ABC Food Bank?

Which staff members are involved in decision making, and how meaningful is their participation?

What values would you say characterize the culture of the ABC Food Bank?

Would you like to work at the ABC Food Bank, either as a paid staff member or as a volunteer? Why, or why not?

Round One

OBSERVER BRIEFING GUIDE

BEFORE THE ROLE PLAYS BEGIN, READ THE FOLLOWING:

Organizational Background

The Alpha-Beta County (ABC) Food Bank serves the entire population of Alpha-Beta County and has the support of all the town councils, civic groups, religious organizations and charitable agencies in the County. The staff is responsible for soliciting cash and food donations, for recruiting and training volunteers, for overseeing local food storage and distribution points, and for working with the state Department of Social Services.

Organizational History

The Alpha-Beta County Food Bank is a twenty-year old agency formed in response to the War on Poverty of the Johnson era. The Food Bank is well-known throughout the County because of its longevity, and it enjoys a reputation of excellence. Down through the years, the Food Bank has worked carefully with local leaders and State officals to respond in a timely manner both to individual needs and to widespread crises. By tracking economic indicators, the Food Bank staff members have been able to predict, with a fair degree of accuracy, the demand for food assistance.

The present Executive Director, although not the Food Bank founder, has trained and managed the staff so well that most matters are handled routinely, as a matter of course.

ROUND ONE WILL CONSIST OF THREE ROLE PLAYS, OR INTERACTIONS, BETWEEN THE FOOD BANK STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

YOUR TASK IS TO OBSERVE WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE ROLE PLAYS AND TO TRY TO DISCOVER WHAT MEANINGS ARE IMPLICIT IN THE CULTURE OF THE ABC FOOD BANK BASED ON WHAT YOU SEE AND HEAR.

USE THE FIVE QUESTIONS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE TO GUIDE YOU AS YOU OBSERVE. YOU SHOULD WRITE DOWN, IN NOTE-TAKING FORM, THE OBSERVATIONS YOU HAVE.

(The notes you take are for your own use and will not be collected or seen by anyone else.)

STUDY THE QUESTIONS BEFORE THE ROLE PLAYS BEGIN.

-OVER-

Round One

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE OBSERVATION

What are the spatial arrangements of the office (i.e., relative positions of people and objects)? What, if anything, do the spatial arrangements reveal about the staff members' way of organizing?

Which people are involved in what type of activities and events?

What feelings seem to be expressed by the various staff members?

How are activities related to the Food Bank's goals? (E.g., do activities reveal the goals?)

What do the participants (staff members and members of the public) say which reveals how they value:

-the Food Bank program itself?

-their activities?

-the people they serve?

ROLE CARD

Member of the Public #1 Round One

You live in the Alpha-Beta County seat and own a medium-size truck which you use in your business. You are wondering if the ABC Food Bank might have occasional need of a truck such as yours. If so, you would be willing to donate your time and the truck to help out. Your business needs are flexible enough to allow the truck to be available almost anytime, with adequate advance notice.

You just happen to be in the building where the Food Bank office is located, and you knock on the door.

Note: In dealing with staff members of the ABC Food Bank, feel free to use your imagination and creativity to make up details that will fit your role above, while still acting appropriately in the context of the organization.

Please do not show this card to anyone. After Round One, please return it to the Facilitator.

ROLE CARD

Member of the Public #2 Round One

You are a member of the professional community in Alpha-Beta County. You are concerned about malnutrition among Native American children living on a nearby reservation, part of which lies in Alpha-Beta County. You want the ABC Food Bank to respond to this matter of **great public concern**.

Since you are in the county seat today on other business, you decide to drop in on the Food Bank office and express your concern personally.

Note: In dealing with staff members of the ABC Food Bank, feel free to use your imagination and creativity to make up details that will fit your role above, while still acting appropriately in the context of the organization.

Please do not show this card to anyone. After Round One, please return it to the Facilitator.

ROLE CARD

Member of the Public #3 — Round One

You live on a fixed income and are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet. You heard from a friend that you could get free food from the ABC Food Bank.

You have stopped in their office to see if you qualify. Also, since you don't have a car, you wonder if they can help you get the heavier items home.

Note: In dealing with staff members of the ABC Food Bank, feel free to use your imagination and creativity to make up details that will fit your role above, while still acting appropriately in the context of the organization.

Please do not show this card to anyone. After Round One, please return it to the Facilitator.

ROLE CARD

Member of the Public #1 — Round Two

You are a representative of the State Department of Social Services. You have come to Alpha-Beta County today to visit the ABC Food Bank in order to verify and collect the Food Bank's annual statistical report. The report must be certified against Food Bank records in order for the ABC Food Bank to continue receiving State subsidies. You are new in your job, and this is your first visit to the ABC Food Bank.

You knock on the office door . . . .

Note: In dealing with staff members of the ABC Food Bank, feel free to use your imagination and creativity to make up details that will fit your role above, while still acting appropriately in the context of the organization.

Please do not show this card to anyone. After Round Two, please return it to the Facilitator.

ABC Food Bank Staff Member
Round Two Briefing Sheet

PLEASE DO NOT SHOW THIS BRIEFING SHEET TO ANYONE ELSE.

Organizational Background

You are one of four staff members of the Alpha-Beta County (ABC) Food Bank. Your agency serves the entire population of Alpha-Beta County and has the support of all the town councils, civic groups, religious organizations and charitable agencies in the County. Your staff is responsible for soliciting cash and food donations, for recruiting and training volunteers, for overseeing local food storage and distribution points, and for working with the state Department of Social Services.

Organizational History

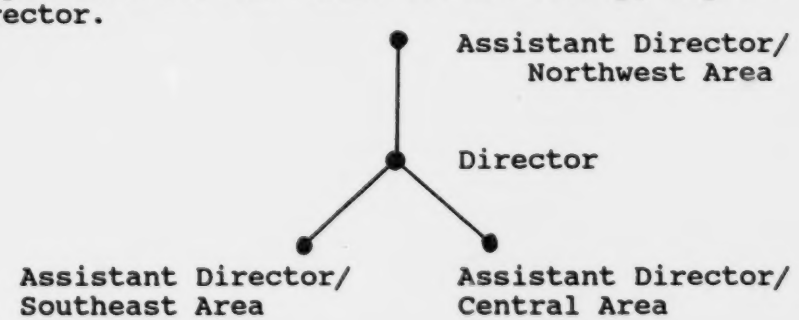
The ABC Food Bank was founded eight years ago by its present Director, a very energetic and charismatic individual who built the Food Bank from the ground up. Numerous problems had to be overcome along the way, not the least of which was resistance from community leaders who denied there was a need for emergency food assistance in their otherwise prosperous towns. The first four years in the Food Bank's history are even called "the uphill years," and several stories of how the Director won various "battles" along the way firmly entrench the Director's unquestioned leadership.

Despite the fact that the Food Bank is the Director's "private empire," the Director is very much a benevolent dictator, exuding kindness, cheerfulness, determination, and compassion in every new situation.

Organizational Structure

Because of the turbulent past and strong leadership from the current Director, the organization has developed a leader-centered structure (see diagram). The three Assistant Directors, each of whom is responsible for one-third of the County, report directly to the Director.

Your role is the highlighted one.



Organizational Assumptions and Core Values

Yours is a creative work environment where challenge and risk taking are the norm. The collective experience of the organization has taught you that no problem is beyond solution. This "can do" spirit pervades your approach to everyday tasks. You pride yourselves on being able to do just about anything and to do it creatively and quickly.

The ABC Food Bank is a busy place, and there's never enough time to get done everything that needs doing. To visit the office is to see people in motion, and your best volunteers are the ones who are out there in the community doing the work. The image of the organization you like to project to the media is one of action. Of course, the constant stimulation puts you all under a fair amount of stress, and that "burned out" feeling is not far behind. When all is said and done, what counts is doing your utmost with the limited resources you have. At the end of a busy day, you feel good, just knowing you gave a 120% effort.

Your organizational culture is characterized by these adjectives: risk-taking, results-oriented, creative, pressurized, stimulating, challenging, enterprising and driving.

Organizational Cultural Rules

During Round Two of this exercise, you will follow the rules given below, which--though not unbreakable--have long come to be "the way things are done around here." These rules are not anything you have agreed upon explicitly or, for that matter, a topic for discussion; they are just normal operating procedure.

(1) Always refer to others using last names. (E.g., "Mr. Sanchez", "Ms. Anderson")

(2) Each of you has a separate "desk" in your own corner of the room. The Director is nearest the door (and receives all visitors to your office). If you wish to speak with another staff member, it is proper for you to get up and go to that person's "desk" and speak quietly--rather than talking with one another across the room.

(3) The Director handles all inquiries initially. If the matter is a general one, relating to the entire County, the Director is responsible to take action. Otherwise, the Director will determine which Area of the County is concerned and will refer the visitor to the appropriate Assistant Director for action.

(4) Before making any decision, always seek the advice of at least one other person. If you are an Assistant Director, that other person will always be the Director.

(5) If at all possible, act immediately to resolve the matter at hand. Don't postpone anything, unless you can't help it.

Note: In dealing with the members of the public during Round Two role plays, feel free to use your imagination to make up details that will fit the context, history, and values of the organization.

PLEASE RETURN THIS BRIEFING SHEET TO THE FACILITATOR AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION FOLLOWING ALL THREE SETS OF ROLE PLAYS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Round Two

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC BRIEFING GUIDE

ROUND TWO WILL CONSIST OF THREE ROLE PLAYS, OR INTERACTIONS, BETWEEN THE FOOD BANK STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. YOU WILL PLAY THE ROLE OF ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. YOUR TASK WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU, WRITTEN ON A SEPARATE CARD, BY THE FACILITATOR.

BEFORE THE ROLE PLAYS BEGIN, READ THE FOLLOWING:

Organizational Background

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Organizational History

The ABC Food Bank was founded eight years ago by its present Director, a very energetic and charismatic individual who built the Food Bank from the ground up. Numerous problems had to be overcome along the way, not the least of which was resistance from community leaders who denied there was a need for emergency food assistance in their otherwise prosperous towns. The first four years in the Food Bank's history are even called "the uphill years," and several stories of how the Director won various "battles" along the way firmly entrench the Director's unquestioned leadership.

Despite the fact that the Food Bank is the Director's "private empire," the Director is very much a benevolent dictator, exuding kindness, cheerfulness, determination, and compassion in every new situation.

IN ADDITION TO PLAYING THE ROLE OF ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, YOU ARE ALSO ASKED TO OBSERVE WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE ROLE PLAYS AND TO TRY TO DISCOVER WHAT MEANINGS ARE IMPLICIT IN THE CULTURE OF THE ABC FOOD BANK BASED ON WHAT YOU SEE, HEAR AND EXPERIENCE.

USE THE FIVE QUESTIONS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE TO GUIDE YOU AS YOU OBSERVE. YOU MAY WRITE DOWN YOUR ANSWERS EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER YOU HAVE PLAYED OUT YOUR ROLE.

(The answers you write down are for your own use and will not be collected or seen by anyone else.)

-OVER-

Round Two

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC OBSERVATION GUIDE

How efficiently do the members of the Food Bank handle the matters brought to them by the members of the public?

What type of leadership style would you say exists at the ABC Food Bank?

Which staff members are involved in decision making, and how meaningful is their participation?

What values would you say characterize the culture of the ABC Food Bank?

Would you like to work at the ABC Food Bank, either as a paid staff member or as a volunteer? Why, or why not?

Round Two

OBSERVER BRIEFING GUIDE

BEFORE THE ROLE PLAYS BEGIN, READ THE FOLLOWING:

Organizational Background

The Alpha-Beta County (ABC) Food Bank serves the entire population of Alpha-Beta County and has the support of all the town councils, civic groups, religious organizations and charitable agencies in the County. The staff is responsible for soliciting cash and food donations, for recruiting and training volunteers, for overseeing local food storage and distribution points, and for working with the state Department of Social Services.

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ROUND TWO WILL CONSIST OF THREE ROLE PLAYS, OR INTERACTIONS, BETWEEN THE FOOD BANK STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

YOUR TASK IS TO OBSERVE WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE ROLE PLAYS AND TO TRY TO DISCOVER WHAT MEANINGS ARE IMPLICIT IN THE CULTURE OF THE ABC FOOD BANK BASED ON WHAT YOU SEE AND HEAR.

USE THE FIVE QUESTIONS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE TO GUIDE YOU AS YOU OBSERVE. YOU SHOULD WRITE DOWN, IN NOTE-TAKING FORM, THE OBSERVATIONS YOU HAVE.

(The notes you take are for your own use and will not be collected or seen by anyone else.)

STUDY THE QUESTIONS BEFORE THE ROLE PLAYS BEGIN.

-OVER-

Round Two

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE OBSERVATION

What are the spatial arrangements of the office (i.e., relative positions of people and objects)? What, if anything, do the spatial arrangements reveal about the staff members' way of organizing?

Which people are involved in what type of activities and events?

What feelings seem to be expressed by the various staff members?

How are activities related to the Food Bank's goals? (E.g., do activities reveal the goals?)

What do the participants (staff members and members of the public) say which reveals how they value:

-the Food Bank program itself?

-their activities?

-the people they serve?

ROLE CARD

Member of the Public #2 - Round Two

You are a member of the professional community in Cedarville, located in Alpha-Beta County. Several of your neighbors are receiving food assistance, and you doubt they qualify. You suspect widespread welfare abuse and consider this a matter of great public concern.

Since you are in the Alpha-Beta County seat today on business, you decide to drop in their office to express your concern in person.

Note: In dealing with staff members of the ABC Food Bank, feel free to use your imagination and creativity to make up details that will fit your role above, while still acting appropriately in the context of the organization.

Please do not show this card to anyone. After Round Two, please return it to the Facilitator.

ROLE CARD

Member of the Public #3 Round Two

You are a single parent who has just lost a job. Your budget is very tight, and you wonder if you might qualify for some form of food aid. You have never been on any kind of welfare before, and things are pretty bad or you wouldn't even consider asking.

Today is the day you have finally swallowed your pride enough to visit the ABC Food Bank's office. Also, you wonder if the Food Bank needs any unskilled labor or light office help.

Note: In dealing with staff members of the ABC Food Bank, feel free to use your imagination and creativity to make up details that will fit your role above, while still acting appropriately in the context of the organization.

Please do not show this card to anyone. After Round Two, please return it to the Facilitator.

ABC Food Bank Staff Member
Round Three Briefing Sheet

PLEASE DO NOT SHOW THIS BRIEFING SHEET TO ANYONE ELSE.

Organizational Background

You are one of four staff members of the Alpha-Beta County (ABC) Food Bank. Your agency serves the entire population of Alpha-Beta County and has the support of all the town councils, civic groups, religious organizations and charitable agencies in the County. Your staff is responsible for soliciting cash and food donations, for recruiting and training volunteers, for overseeing local food storage and distribution points, and for working with the state Department of Social Services.

Organizational History

The ABC Food Bank is a newly-formed organization. Although several other agencies had been giving food assistance in the past, their programs were not well coordinated. When the former agency leaders realized there were gaps in overall coverage, they decided to band together to provide this vital service to all needy people, wherever they might live in the County.

The four of you represent the different programs which existed previously but have now merged under one "umbrella" organization. Despite having come from agencies with diverse emphases, approaches, and structures, you are all strongly united by your common goal of serving people in need. You truly desire to work together to provide a uniform and quality service in a well-coordinated, timely, and efficient manner.

Organizational Structure

Because the ABC Food Bank is relatively new, no formal structure for the organization has been officially decided yet. The Food Bank's charter and by-laws are still being finalized. It is very much a loose, friendly outfit whose members enjoy working with volunteers, meeting the public, and serving people.

A clear pattern of responsibility within the organization has evolved, however, not out of any conscious attempt to plan, but out of the unique expertise and prior experiences of each of the four members. The particular areas of responsibility of each staff member are listed below under "Responsibilities."

Because each of the four members is new to the organization and doesn't want the others to think that he or she is trying to take control, staff members are a bit uncertain of their leadership styles. They are somewhat frustrated because they want things to happen, but feel they must move slowly and cautiously

lest they make major mistakes which will hinder future efforts. One way they cope with these uncertainties is to discuss every decision with at least one other staff member before agreeing on any course of action.

Roles

The four of you will assume the roles referred to in the diagram on the next page by the letters A, B, C, and D.

Your role is the one highlighted.

Now fill in all four first names in the appropriate boxes in the diagram.

Organizational Assumptions and Core Values

Your work environment is friendly, and staff members are friendly and helpful to each other and to the organization. An open, harmonious environment is encouraged, and "family" values are promoted. The Food Bank is supportive of its staff members and volunteers, expressing that support through attitudes that establish the Food Bank as trusting, equitable, safe, social, encouraging, relationship-oriented, collaborative, and a giver of personal freedom.

You value people above programs and seek to establish relationships--not just to provide a service. You want those relationships to enhance people's control over their own lives and to enhance dignity and self-respect among the needy. You believe people who donate food or volunteer their time also have a stake in your program, and you treat them accordingly.

Organizational Cultural Rules

During Round Three of this exercise, you will follow the rules given below, which--though not unbreakable--have long come to be "the way things are done around here." These rules are not anything you have agreed upon explicitly or, for that matter, a topic for discussion; they are just normal operating procedure.

(1) Always refer to others by their first name.

(2) Your four "desks" are pushed together in the center of the room to form one large "table"; when one person wants to talk with another staff member, he or she just stays seated, addresses the other person, and proceeds talking so that all can hear.

Note: You may want to arrange yourselves around the table so that persons A, B, D, and C are seated next to each other, clockwise--as in the diagram on the next page.

(3) When visitors come into your office, all listen while the inquiry or business at hand is stated. Any one of the four staff members is free to direct the visitor to the two individuals (remember--use first names) who, according to the Table of Responsibilities below, will proceed to help the visitor. Once the designation has been made, those two staff members continue helping the visitor until he or she leaves.

(4) Decisions are made jointly by the two members who have jurisdiction (according to the Table of Responsibilities). Both must give approval to an idea or solution before it is final.

(5) Because of the newness of the organization and the fears all members have about making mistakes which will be difficult or impossible to correct later, staff members tend to put off making decisions whenever possible.

Responsibilities

Each pair of members has responsibility for the areas or concerns listed next to each row or column of the matrix below:

<table>
<tr><td>A
_____</td><td>B
_____</td><td>A & B: interagency cooperation, liaison with the State</td></tr>
<tr><td>C
_____</td><td>D
_____</td><td>C & D: bookkeeping, financial reports, qualification of program recipients (i.e., people needing food assistance)</td></tr>
<tr><td>A & C:
public relations</td><td colspan="2">B & D:
volunteer recruitment & coordination
organizational development</td></tr>
</table>

Note: In dealing with the members of the public during Round Three role plays, feel free to use your imagination to make up details that will fit the context, history, and values of the organization.

PLEASE RETURN THIS BRIEFING SHEET TO THE FACILITATOR AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION FOLLOWING ALL THREE SETS OF ROLE PLAYS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC BRIEFING GUIDE

ROUND THREE WILL CONSIST OF THREE ROLE PLAYS, OR INTERACTIONS, BETWEEN THE FOOD BANK STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. YOU WILL PLAY THE ROLE OF ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. YOUR TASK WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU, WRITTEN ON A SEPARATE CARD, BY THE FACILITATOR.

BEFORE THE ROLE PLAYS BEGIN, READ THE FOLLOWING:

Organizational Background

The Alpha-Beta County (ABC) Food Bank serves the entire population of Alpha-Beta County and has the support of all the town councils, civic groups, religious organizations and charitable agencies in the County. The staff is responsible for soliciting cash and food donations, for recruiting and training volunteers, for overseeing local food storage and distribution points, and for working with the state Department of Social Services.

Organizational History

The ABC Food Bank is a newly-formed organization. Although several other agencies had been giving food assistance in the past, their programs were not well coordinated. When the former agency leaders realized there were gaps in overall coverage, they decided to band together to provide this vital service to all needy people, wherever they might live in the County.

The current Food Bank staff members represent four different programs which existed previously but have now merged under one "umbrella" organization. Despite having come from agencies with diverse emphases, approaches, and structures, they are all strongly united by their common goal of serving people in need. They truly desire to work together to provide a uniform and quality service in a well-coordinated, timely, and efficient manner.

IN ADDITION TO PLAYING THE ROLE OF ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, YOU ARE ALSO ASKED TO OBSERVE WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE ROLE PLAYS AND TO TRY TO DISCOVER WHAT MEANINGS ARE IMPLICIT IN THE CULTURE OF THE ABC FOOD BANK BASED ON WHAT YOU SEE, HEAR AND EXPERIENCE.

USE THE FIVE QUESTIONS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE TO GUIDE YOU AS YOU OBSERVE. YOU MAY WRITE DOWN YOUR ANSWERS EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER YOU HAVE PLAYED OUT YOUR ROLE.

(The answers you write down are for your own use and will not be collected or seen by anyone else.)

-OVER-

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC OBSERVATION GUIDE

How efficiently do the members of the Food Bank handle the matters brought to them by the members of the public?

What type of leadership style would you say exists at the ABC Food Bank?

Which staff members are involved in decision making, and how meaningful is their participation?

What values would you say characterize the culture of the ABC Food Bank?

Would you like to work at the ABC Food Bank, either as a paid staff member or as a volunteer? Why, or why not?

OBSERVER BRIEFING GUIDE

BEFORE THE ROLE PLAYS BEGIN, READ THE FOLLOWING:

Organizational Background

The Alpha-Beta County (ABC) Food Bank serves the entire population of Alpha-Beta County and has the support of all the town councils, civic groups, religious organizations and charitable agencies in the County. The staff is responsible for soliciting cash and food donations, for recruiting and training volunteers, for overseeing local food storage and distribution points, and for working with the state Department of Social Services.

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ROUND THREE WILL CONSIST OF THREE ROLE PLAYS, OR INTERACTIONS, BETWEEN THE FOOD BANK STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

YOUR TASK IS TO OBSERVE WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE ROLE PLAYS AND TO TRY TO DISCOVER WHAT MEANINGS ARE IMPLICIT IN THE CULTURE OF THE ABC FOOD BANK BASED ON WHAT YOU SEE AND HEAR.

USE THE FIVE QUESTIONS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE TO GUIDE YOU AS YOU OBSERVE. YOU SHOULD WRITE DOWN, IN NOTE-TAKING FORM, THE OBSERVATIONS YOU HAVE.

(The notes you take are for your own use and will not be collected or seen by anyone else.)

STUDY THE QUESTIONS BEFORE THE ROLE PLAYS BEGIN.

-OVER-

Round Three

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE OBSERVATION

What are the spatial arrangements of the office (i.e., relative positions of people and objects)? What, if anything, do the spatial arrangements reveal about the staff members' way of organizing?

Which people are involved in what type of activities and events?

What feelings seem to be expressed by the various staff members?

How are activities related to the Food Bank's goals? (E.g., do activities reveal the goals?)

What do the participants (staff members and members of the public) say which reveals how they value:

-the Food Bank program itself?

-their activities?

-the people they serve?

ROLE CARD

Member of the Public #1 — Round Three

You are a retired accountant and wonder if you could volunteer your services to the ABC Food Bank for a few hours a week.

You decide to pop in their office today.

Note: In dealing with staff members of the ABC Food Bank, feel free to use your imagination and creativity to make up details that will fit your role above, while still acting appropriately in the context of the organization.

Please do not show this card to anyone. After Round Three, please return it to the Facilitator.

ROLE CARD

Member of the Public #2 — Round Three

You are a representative of the State Department of Social Services. You have come to Alpha-Beta County today to visit the ABC Food Bank in order to verify and collect the Food Bank's annual statistical report. The report must be certified against Food Bank records in order for the ABC Food Bank to continue receiving State subsidies. You are new in your job, and this is your first visit to the ABC Food Bank.

You knock on the office door . . . .

Note: In dealing with staff members of the ABC Food Bank, feel free to use your imagination and creativity to make up details that will fit your role above, while still acting appropriately in the context of the organization.

Please do not show this card to anyone. After Round Three, please return it to the Facilitator.

ROLE CARD

Member of the Public #3 - Round Three

You are a member of the professional community in Ironwood, located in Alpha-Beta County. Several of your neighbors and you are concerned about a matter of great public importance: food needs of the homeless in Ironwood.

Since you are in the Alpha-Beta County seat today on business, you decide to drop in their office to express your concern in person.

Note: In dealing with staff members of the ABC Food Bank, feel free to use your imagination and creativity to make up details that will fit your role above, while still acting appropriately in the context of the organization.

Please do not show this card to anyone. After Round Three, please return it to the Facilitator.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

ON COPING WITH ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

(1A) When we find ourselves in an organization whose culture we perceive to be dysfunctional, what should the elements of a "coping strategy" be?

(1B) How should new members in an organization bring their concerns about organizational problems to organizational leaders?

(1C) When should a member of an organization give up trying to *cope* with a dysfunctional organizational culture and *leave* the organization?

ON MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

(2A) Of all that you have experienced and learned about managing organizational culture, what application would you make to a community-based organization of which you are a member? Why?

(2B) *Given the present culture of the organization,* how would you go about making the changes in the organization's culture that you feel are needed?

DISCUSSION GUIDE
(Continued)

(3) Saphier and King identify twelve cultural norms that are positively related to organizational development in schools:

Collegiality	Reaching out to the knowledge bases
Experimentation	Appreciation and recognition
High expectations	Caring, celebration, and humor
Trust and confidence	Involvement in decision making
Tangible support	Protection of what's important
Traditions	Honest, open communication

(3A) How relevant are these characteristics to an organization you are concerned about? Are there other characteristics you would add to their list?

(3B) Which of these cultural norms are already strong in the organization you are concerned about?

(3C) Which characteristics are weak in your organization's culture, and what could you do to strengthen them?

(Source: Jon Saphier and Matthew King. "Good Seeds Grow in Strong Cultures." *Educational Leadership* 42:6 [March 1985], pp. 67-74.)

FOR FURTHER LEARNING ABOUT ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

ACTIVITIES

(1) Reread the article which accompanies these materials, and answer the "Thought Questions" with reference to a second or third organization you belong to.

(2) Visit an organization (e.g., hospital, school, church) to observe its culture. Use the types of questions (listed on the back of this page) to guide you. What can you learn of the organization's culture?

(3) Keep a journal of critical incidents, revealing statements, surprising events or actions, consequences of rule-breaking, or stories that you think reveal significant aspects of an organization's culture.

(4) Ask the members of an organization whose culture you are trying to understand better how they feel about the organization, what they would do to change it, and why.

(5) If appropriate, discuss with other organizational members and/or leaders what you have learned about the culture of their organization. Does the organizational culture reveal problems not previously identified or new aspects of old problems? Discuss with them ways that, through management of the organizational culture, the problems could be addressed.

RECOMMENDED READING

Deal, Terrence E. and Allen A. Kennedy. *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life*. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison Wesley Publishing Co., 1982.

Kilmann, Ralph H. "Corporate Culture." *Psychology Today* (April 1985), pp. 62-68.

Schein, Edgar H. *Organizational Culture and Leadership A Dynamic View*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1986.

Spradley, James P. *Participant Observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980.

If you desire more references, your Facilitator can give you an additional bibliography on organizational culture.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE
OBSERVATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES

What are the spatial arrangements of the office (i.e., the relative positions of people and objects)? What, if anything, do the spatial arrangements reveal about the members' way of organizing?

Which people are involved in what types of activities and events?

What feelings seem to be expressed by the members of the organization?

How are activities related to the organization's supposed goals? Do people's activities reveal other goals?

What do organizational members and nonmembers say which reveals how they value:

-the organization?

-their activities within the organization?

-the organization's clientele?

The Culture of Organizations

PARTICIPANT EVALUATION FORM

PLEASE COMMENT FREELY ON ANY OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

Usefulness, relevance to your own situation

-of the written article:

-of the role plays & debriefing:

-of the discussion:

Clarity

-of the written article:

-of the role play written materials:

-of the discussion:

Degree to which you improved your understanding of and/or competence in the subject matter?

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESSES--How do you rate:

Overall session design:

Use made of written article:

Role plays and debriefing:

Discussion:

Did any of the processes above run too long? Too short?

-OVER-

THE FACILITATOR--How do you rate his facilitating/group leading skills:

teaching/explaining abilities:

ability to lead a focussed discussion?

listening skills?

interpersonal skills?

ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT?

OTHER COMMENTS:

THANK YOU!

NOTE: for easy filing and retrieval, paste this page to the outside of the envelope containing all the materials.

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THE CULTURE OF ORGANIZATIONS
A Set of Learning Activities for Community Leaders

Designed by Jim Ulrich, Ph.D.
August 1988

OVERVIEW

"The Culture of Organizations" contains materials, process guidelines, discussion questions, and suggestions all of which serve as a guide for a three-hour training session introducing the topic of organizational culture to a group of from 7 to 21 (or more) adults.

MATERIALS LIST:

Facilitator Guide (9 pp.)
"The Culture of Organizations" Article (Participant Guide)
ABC Food Bank Staff Member Round One Briefing Sheet (3 pp.)
Member of the Public Round One Briefing Guide (2 pp.)
Observer Briefing Guide (Round One) (2 pp.)
Round One Role Cards (3)
ABC Food Bank Staff Member Round Two Briefing Sheet (3 pp.)
Member of the Public Round Two Briefing Guide (2 pp.)
Observer Briefing Guide (Round Two) (2 pp.)
Round Two Role Cards (3)
ABC Food Bank Staff Member Round Three Briefing Sheet (3 pp.)
Member of the Public Round Three Briefing Guide (2 pp.)
Observer Briefing Guide (Round Three) (2 pp.)
Round Three Role Cards (3)
Discussion Guide (2 pp.)
"For Further Learning" Handout (2 pp.)
Participant Evaluation Form (2 pp.)